



Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
(Wildlife Division)

6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Vayu Wing  
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan  
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj  
New Delhi-110003

F.No.6-79/2015 WL (35<sup>th</sup> Meeting)

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015

To

All Members,  
Standing Committee of NBWL.

Sub: Minutes of 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL.

Sir/Madam,

Kindly find enclosed copy of the minutes of the 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015 at 11.00 AM in Teesta & Brahmaputra", 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Vayu Block, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh, New Delhi-110003 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

Yours faithfully,

*R. Rajasekhara*

(Rajasekhara Ratti)

Scientist 'C'/Deputy Director (WL)

Encl: As above

**Distribution:**

1. Secretary, MoEF & CC
2. Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, MoEF & CC.
3. Member Secretary, NTCA, New Delhi.
4. Addl. Director General of Forests (WL), MoEF&CC.
5. Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
6. Director, GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
7. Prof. R.Sukumar, Central for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
8. Dr. H.S. Singh, Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat.
9. Pr. Secretary (Forests), Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

**Copy to:**

1. PPS to Hon'ble MOS (I/C) E&F.
2. PPS to DGF&SS.
3. PPS to Addl.DGF(WL) and Member Secretary, Standing Committee (NBWL).
4. PPS to IGF(WL)/PS to DIG(WL)/PS to JD(WL).

## **Minutes of the 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2015**

\*\*\*

The 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL) was held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015 in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

Hon'ble Chairman welcomed all participants to the 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL and requested the Member Secretary to initiate the discussions on the agenda items.

The agenda items were then taken up for discussion.

### **Agenda No. 1:**

#### **Confirmation of the minutes of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 were circulated to all members of the Standing Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

Member Dr. H.S.Singh suggested that in Agenda item no 3 of last meeting he had proposed that Indian Sarus may be included in the conservation measures for Species Recovery and that the decision on this was required. It was agreed that WII will provide the conservation status of Indian Sarus.

It was also agreed that the para 3 in the minutes for items 34.1.2.6 and 34.1.2.7 should read as follows:

“The Chief Wild Life Warden Himachal Pradesh informed that industries should have corporate social responsibility for conservation and protection of wild life and its habitats.”

Accordingly, the minutes of 34<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed.

### **Agenda No.2: Action Taken Report on the decisions of the Standing Committee of NBWL in its 34<sup>th</sup> meeting**

#### **33.4.1.(3) Proposal for rationalization of the boundary for Maldhok Bird Sanctuary, Maharashtra.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. He mentioned that the Scheme for conservation breeding of GIB has been approved from CAMPA funds. States have been advised to take up conservation of habitats from their CAMPA funds and other resources. Rationalization of the boundary proposal may be considered in view of integrated work already planned in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The Chief Wildlife Warden, Maharashtra made a power-point presentation of the proposal before the committee. It was agreed that a group led by Dr.H.S.Singh, member NBWL will examine the proposal including report of the District Collector on the proposed boundaries. Other members of the group will be representative of WII, FSI and wildlife division. Further, CWLW, Maharashtra will facilitate the work of the group.

#### **34.1.2 Representations received on earlier decisions of Standing Committee of NBWL (SC NBWL)**

##### ***34.1.2.4: Seoni to MP/MH border section of NH-7 (Item No 4.2 (26) of the minutes of 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of Standing Committee)***

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. Item approved in 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of standing committee was reviewed in 34<sup>th</sup> committee regarding the mitigation structures namely tunnels and elevated structures. As directed in the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting, the group of NTCA, WII and NHAI reviewed the proposed mitigation measures and NHAI agreed for the eco-duct i.e., landscaping above the main carriageway to provide connectivity to the wildlife. Committee recommended the measures proposed and agreed by NHAI.

##### ***34.1.2.5 Gwalior- Shivpuri section of NH-3 passing through Madhav National Park (Item No 4.2 (32) of the minutes of 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of Standing Committee)***

In the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting review was decided to be undertaken by the group of representative of WII, NTCA and NHAI. The review was not yet taken up. Therefore, the matter was deferred.

##### ***34.1.2.6 M/s Jaypee Himachal Cement Plant: Waiving of condition of 2% of the project cost for the proposal which has been recommended in 31<sup>st</sup> SC NBWL meeting held 12-13<sup>th</sup> August 2014.***

##### ***34.1.2.7 M/s Ambuja Cement Ltd: Waiving of condition of 2% of the cost project for three proposals which have been recommended in 31<sup>st</sup> SC NBWL meeting held on 12-13<sup>th</sup> August 2014.***

Dr. H. S. Singh presented the report of the group constituted to frame policy recommendations on the above representations. The recommendations of the group were considered by the committee and were accepted as a policy. Ministry shall issue the policy decision separately.

The representations of the applicants stand disposed of accordingly.

##### ***34.1.2.8 Expansion of the integrated Steel Plant from 10.0 MTPA to 16.0 MTPA along with the captive power plant of 600 MW in JSW steel Complex at Toranagallu, Sandur Taluk, Bellary district***

##### ***34.1.2.9 Expansion of the JSW Energy from 860 MW to 1520 MW Power Plant at Toranagallu, Sandur Taluk, Bellary District, Karnataka***

##### ***34.1.2.10 Proposed DRI plant of capacity 1.2MTPA, within JSW Steel Complex at Toranagallu, Sandur Taluk, Bellary District, Karnataka***

**34.1.2.11 Proposal for NBWL recommendations for existing projects within JSW Steel Complex of M/s JSW Steel Ltd., Toranagallu, Sandur Taluk, Bellary District, Karnataka.**

The member secretary informed the Committee that the ESZ proposals of Karnataka including Daroji Bear Sanctuary and others were received and scrutinized in the wildlife division. The proposals are under process for notification.

The Committee considered the proposals accordingly. Member Secretary informed that the projects are the expansions or installations within the existing integrated Steel Complex, which are located at a distance of 5.66 km from the sanctuary and outside the proposed ESZ. Considering the distance from the sanctuary and that the activities are located within the premises of the existing steel complex, the Committee agreed to recommend the proposals for Environment Clearance.

**34.4.2 Proposals for taking up activities within 10 kms from the boundaries of Protected Areas.**

**34.4.2.1 Diversion of 300.00 ha of forest land in Kistasagar R.F of Paloncha Division for establishment of Pulp & Paper Industry by M/s ITC Ltd., at Khammam, in favour of APIIC, Hyderabad.**

Detailed presentation was made by Shri Bharat Pathak who undertook the site visit. He informed the Committee that a Writ Petition is pending in the Hon'ble High Court of Hyderabad. Moreover, there were issues related to functions of the Joint Forest Management Committees who were functioning in the forest area, proposed to be used in the project. Since EC process of the project is also yet to start, Standing Committee decided to defer the project.

**34.4.2.2 Diversion of 231.84 ha of forest land in Chatakonda Reserve Forest of Kothagudem Division for Koyagudem OC-II (Phase-II) coal mining project, in favour of M/s Singareni Collieries Company Ltd., Telangana.**

Detailed presentation was made by Shri Bharat Pathak after making the site visit. He stated that the mining site is located at 4.16 km of Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary. The proposal for ESZ of Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary had been received and scrutinized in the wildlife division. The proposals are under process for notification. The Standing Committee decided to defer the proposal pending notification of ESZ of Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary.

**34.4.2.3 Construction of Simang-II HEP (66 MW) by Upper Simang Power Pvt. Ltd in East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The proposal has been recommended in the Cumulative Impact Assessment Study for the river basin. The project is located 5.3 km away from Mauling National Park. EC has been recommended for the proposal. Forest Clearance is under consideration of the Ministry.

After discussions, the Standing Committee asked Dr. R. Sukumar, member, NBWL to conduct a site visit to assess the impact of the project on wildlife and decided to recommend the

proposal. The conditions suggested in the proposal by the Forest Department, as recommended by the State Board for Wild life shall also be complied with.

**34.4.2.4 Construction of Tagurshit HEP (74 MW) by M/s L&T Arunachal Hydro Power Ltd. in West Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The proposal has been recommended in the Cumulative Impact Assessment Study. The project is located 9.5 km from the YordiRabeSupeWild Life Sanctuary. EC has been recommended for the proposal. FC is under consideration of the Ministry.

After discussions, the Standing Committee asked Dr. R. Sukumar, member, NBWL to conduct a site visit to assess the impact of the project on wildlife and decided to recommend the proposal. The conditions suggested in the proposal by the Forest Department, as recommended by the State Board for Wild life shall also be complied with.

**Agenda Item no.3**

**35.2.1 Agenda Items on Policy Matters for Discussion.**

**35.2.1.1 Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone around Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the necessity of placing the matter before the Standing Committee. He mentioned that in its order dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014, the National Green Tribunal had stipulated that the Secretary, MoEFCC shall make necessary consultation with National Board for Wildlife while notifying the ESZ around Okhla Bird Sanctuary. The proposal was formulated as per the provisions of Environment Protection Rules, by publication of draft notification, providing 60 days of public comments and has been finalized after consideration of the comments received.

After discussions, the Committee decided to recommend the ESZ proposal for final notification.

**35.2.2 Representations received on earlier decisions of Standing Committee of NBWL (SC NBWL)**

**35.2.2.1 Reconsideration of NBWL recommendation for conducting EIA/EMP study for construction of new Mullaiperiyar Dam**

The member secretary informed the Committee that in its 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Committee had permitted the conducting of EIA study of proposed new Mullaiperiyar Dam in the vicinity of existing Dam. However, subsequently, it was brought to the notice by Govt. of Tamil Nadu that Supreme Court in its decree on 7.5.2014 had directed that agreement between Tamilnadu and Kerala was necessary for construction of a new Dam. It was also informed that the TOR of EC process have been rejected. In such a scenario, the recommendation of Standing Committee becomes irrelevant.



In view of the above facts, the Committee decided to withdraw its earlier recommendation for EIA study.

**35.2.2.2 Representation received from M/s HOECL for waiving of condition (iii) for allowing drilling at night time and request to allow construction of gas processing plant which was proposed in Golai Elephant corridor pending NGT order.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal regarding waiving of condition (iii) of recommendation of 34<sup>th</sup> SC NBWL meeting which restricts drilling operation at night time.

The user agency requested that the drilling operation of the proposed appraisal well will be required for 24 hrs and continuously for 40 to 50 days. Dr.R.Sukumar, referring to his earlier site visit to Dirok Tea Estate, stated that there will be no adverse impact on the wildlife due to drilling during night time as the drilling site is located within the tea estate and away from DehingPatkai Wildlife Sanctuary.

After discussions, the standing committee decided to waive of the condition no. (iii) of earlier recommendation and permitted night time drilling.

**Agenda item No. 4**

**35.4.1 Proposals for diversion of forest land of PAs**

**35.4.1.1. Survey and investigation activities for construction of Bursar Hydro Electric Project in Kishtwar High Altitude National Park, J&K**

The member secretary informed the committee that the state government has communicated that boundaries of the KHANP have been rationalized vide a recent notification and joint field verification is being done to assess the location of the project vis-vis the new boundaries of the National Park.

The Standing Committee decided to refer the proposal back to the State Government.

**35.4.1.2. Diversion of 0.20 ha in Pulicat Bird Sanctuary for construction of evacuation shelter (community hall building 2000 Persons capacity) at Pazhaverkadu (Kottaikuppam) in Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The representative of Chief Wildlife Warden, Tamilnadu explained the necessity of the evacuation shelter inside the bird Sanctuary and intimated that it is a measure for disaster management for the local population.

After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal.

**35.4.1.3. Diversion of 1.62 ha of forestland from Kedarnath Musk Deer Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of road from Jalmalla to Chilond village, Uttarakhand.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. He informed that road was an existing cart road and required up gradation. After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal to facilitate connectivity to the inhabitants of the villages. The conditions suggested by the Chief Wild Life Warden were agreed to.

**35.4.1.4. Diversion of 0.96 ha of reserved forestland from Kaimur Wildlife sanctuary for upgradation of the road kolia-Rijul passes through a small patch of Kaimoor Wildlife Sanctuary, Mirzapur / Sonebhadra within left wing extremism affected area in district Sonebhadra, Uttar Pradesh.**

**35.4.1.5. Diversion of 0.84 ha of reserved forestland from Kaimur Wildlife sanctuary for upgradation of the road kolia-Shilpi passes through a small patch of Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary, Mirzapur/Sonebhadra within left wing extremism affected area in district Sonebhadra, Uttar Pradesh.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the above two proposals. The CWLW, Uttar Pradesh informed that length of both the roads meet at Kolia and run in opposite directions and are located in LWE areas. After discussions, the Committee decided to recommend the proposals with the conditions recommended the Chief Wild Life Warden.

**35.4.1.6. Proposal for diversion of 18.795 ha forestland in GautamBudha Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of 11 KV Chouparan - Chordaha line and its associated LT Lines, Jharkhand.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The representative of the CWLW, Jharkhand informed the Committee that the line was approved by the Standing Committee earlier for taking underground. The proposal accordingly has been placed for consideration of the Committee. He stated that present ROW along NH-2 is proposed to be widened in near future and therefore the transmission line would have to be taken through the nearby forest.

After discussions, the Committee decided to recommend the proposal along with the conditions prescribed by the CWLW.

**35.4.1.7. Proposal for widening of existing 4-lane to 6-lane divided carriageway of Aurangabad-BarwaAdda section on NH-2 in the states of Bihar and Jharkhand.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. After discussions the Committee deferred the proposal suggesting Forest Department to furnish information on the record of animal accidents and mitigation measures already taken up while constructing the 4 lane road for consideration of the Committee in the next meeting.

**35.4.1.8. Diversion of 4.90 ha of forest land in Marine Sanctuary for tugs & barges of Hind Marine works, Jamnagar, Gujarat.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The CWLW, Gujarat informed the Committee that the proposed site is located inside the Marine Sanctuary and till 2012 was controlled by Gujarat Maritime Board. After discussions, the Committee deferred the proposal.

### **35.4.2 Proposals for taking up activities within 10 kms from the boundaries of Protected Areas.**

#### **35.4.2.1. Proposal of M/s Nalwaya Minerals Industries Pvt. Ltd for soapstone mining lease no.6/98 in village Nathraki Pal, tehsil Sarada, District Udaipur near Jaisamand Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The location of the mine is 8 km from the WL Sanctuary and it is an existing mine proposed for extension of lease. No clearing of vegetation is involved.

Committee discussed the proposal in light of the impact on the PA. It was informed that the ecologically sensitive zone for the sanctuary has been proposed for a distance of 100 meter to 5 km from the sanctuary. Considering that there may not be direct impact of the activity on the WLS, Committee agreed to recommend the proposal for environmental clearance, with following conditions:

- 1. Manpower engaged in project work will not use firewood and domestic gas shall be provided by the company to the labour.*
- 2. User agency shall deposit an amount of Rs 50 lakh in the account of Rajasthan Protected Area Conservation Society for development and management of adjoining sanctuary area.*
- 3. Seasonal / perennial water bodies and streams leading to Thana River shall be maintained and any siltation due to the mining shall not be allowed to happen. Appropriate protection measures shall be taken by the project proponent for this purpose, to the satisfaction of the Wild Life Warden.*

#### **35.4.2.2. Proposal of M/s Nalwaya Minerals Industries Pvt. Ltd for renewal of Soap Stone mining lease no.5/2001 in village Nathraki Pal III C, Tehsil Sarada, District Udaipur, Rajasthan.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The location of the project is 7.2 km away from the sanctuary and outside the proposed eco sensitive zone. The matter is placed before the Committee for consideration of Environment Clearance, for renewal of the mining lease.

Committee, considering that the location and that appropriate mitigation measures shall be provided in the environmental clearance, recommended the proposal with the following conditions:

- 1. Manpower engaged in project work will not use firewood and domestic gas shall be provided by the company to the labour.*
- 2. User agency shall deposit an amount of Rs 50 lakh in the account of Rajasthan Protected Area Conservation Society for development and management of adjoining sanctuary area.*
- 3. Seasonal / perennial water bodies and streams leading to Thana river shall be maintained and any siltation due to the mining shall not be allowed to happen.*



*Appropriate protection measures shall be taken for this purpose by the user agency to the satisfaction of the Wild Life Warden.*

**35.4.2.3. Proposal for diversion of 1.46 ha of private owned land falling within eco-sensitive zone of Rowa Wildlife Sanctuary, Tripura to drill the exploratory location KHBK, Tripura.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. Proposed site is reported to be crucial for working on the potential of hydrocarbons in Eastern Tripura Block AA-ONN-2001/1, located 1.5 km away from the boundary of the sanctuary. Proposed eco sensitive zone is 10meter to 100 meter, and is under processing.

The committee considered that the proposal is for exploratory drilling and is located in private land, the Committee agreed to recommend the proposal for environmental clearance with adequate precautions. The condition prescribed by the Chief Wild Life Warden were also agreed to, that the user agency will provide funds for raising forage plantation for wildlife and other management activities in the sanctuary. The plan shall be vetted and proposed by Chief Wild Life Warden and the funds shall be placed at his disposal.

**35.4.2.4. Clearance for proposed soda ash project by M/s RSPL Ltd, near Kunranja village, Dwaraka Taluk, Gujarat.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The site is located 6.40 km from Gaga Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary. The ecosensitive zone is proposed for 1 km distance from the sanctuary and is under processing.

Committee considered the proposal and agreed to recommend it in view of the fact that environmental clearance for the project envisages all the aspects of environmental impact in the vicinity, and appropriate mitigation measures provided and Environment Management Plan in the EC clearance shall be complied with. Committee also agreed to the condition proposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden that the user agency shall raise green belt in the area surrounding the sanctuary at their cost. The funds shall be provided in the manner, to be prescribed by the Chief Wild Life Warden.

**35.4.2.5. Proposal for National Cancer Institute (NCI) at village Badsha, Dist.Jajjar, Haryana, as part of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The Institute is located within the notified Eco Sensitive Zone of Sultanpur Wild Life Sanctuary, at a distance of 3.8 km from the boundary of the sanctuary.

Committee considered the fact that the project is a public utility, withultra-modern construction and all the environmental safeguards. The Committee recommended the project for environment clearance with the conditions imposed in the Environmental Clearance for the project to be complied with and that appropriate green belt shall be raised and maintained by the Institute around it.

**35.4.2.6. Proposal of NHAI, Mangalore for 4/6 lanning of Goa Karnataka border-Kundapur section of NH-66 (formerly NH-17), Goa near Catigaon WLS.**

The member secretary briefed the committee on the proposal. The proposed project is in Karnataka state but is located 5.5 km away from Catigaon WL sanctuary in Goa. The Eco Sensitive Zone for Catigaon WL Sanctuary, notified vide SO 630 (E) dated 3 March 2014 is spread upto 3 km from the boundary.

Considering that the road is located outside the Eco Sensitive Zone of the sanctuary, Committee recommended the project for environment clearance.

**Agenda Item no. 5: Any other Item with the permission of the Chair.**

**35.4.5.1: Use of 49.246 ha forest land for upgradation of NH-07 from Mansar to MP border, placed for consideration of Standing Committee with advice of National Tiger Conservation Authority, under section 38 (O) (g) of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972.**

Member Secretary NTCA informed that the proposal was received from the state government for consideration of the Standing Committee in light of the fact that the area is a part of identified tiger corridor. In this context, at the instance of Hon'ble High Court of Maharashtra at Nagpur, consultations were held among Chief Minister Maharashtra and Ministers of Environment Forests and Climate Change and Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping on 13.02.2015. Accordingly a team of Wild Life Institute of India, NTCA, State wild Life officials and NHAI worked on the design of mitigation measures for ensuring sustainability of the conservation measures, while developing the public service project, which is an existing road.

The proposal thus finalized was presented by Member Secretary NTCA and NHAI representatives agreed to abide by the plan. Considering the feasibility of the proposed mitigation measures, acceptance of the conditions by NHAI authorities, the Committee accepted the proposal under the section 38 (O) (g) of WLPA as follows:

In the said stretch of NH-07, 6 out of 9 structures are to be undertaken in any case by NHAI as part of their normal road construction activity and only 3 new structures have been proposed by WII, having width of 750 m, 750 m and 300 m with height of 5 m each. These will be taken up by NHAI along this stretch.

**35.4.5.2: Use of 85.058 ha forest land (revised to 38.321 ha) for upgradation of NH-06 in Bhandara and Gondia placed for consideration of Standing Committee with advice of National Tiger Conservation Authority, in accordance with section 38 (O) (g) of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972.**

Member Secretary NTCA informed that the proposal was received from the state government for consideration of the Standing Committee in light of the fact that the area is a part of identified tiger corridor in Central Indian Tiger Landscape. As the national highway 06 is an existing road proposed for upgradation from 2 lane to 4 lane, and connectivity across the landscape is a need of conservation, a team of Wild Life Institute of India, NTCA, State wild Life officials and NHAI worked on the design of mitigation measures for ensuring sustainability

of tiger conservation measures, while developing the public service utility, which is an existing road.

The proposal thus finalized was presented by Member Secretary NTCA and NHAI representatives agreed to abide by the plan. Considering the feasibility of the proposed mitigation measures and acceptance of the conditions by NHAI authorities, the Committee accepted the proposal under the section 38 (O) (g) of WLPA as follows.

In the said stretch, out of the 4 structures proposed by WII and agreed by NTCA, one has already been developed by NHAI. NHAI agreed to remaining 3 structures as recommended by WII and NTCA in its report dated 30.05.2015, as mitigation measures.

**35.4.5.1: Proposal for boundary alteration of Kolleru Wild Life Sanctuary, Andhra Pradesh.**

Additional Chief Secretary Forests Andhra Pradesh and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Andhra Pradesh sought permission of Chair to present the proposal recommended by the State Board for Wild Life Andhra Pradesh, recommending reduction of area of Kolleru Wild Life Sanctuary, from existing about 308 sq km to 135 sq km, by redefining the boundary from the existing +5 feet above msl to + 3 feet msl.

State officials made a detailed presentation indicating that the present extent notified as sanctuary includes about 14861 acres of zirayati (private) lands which is the basis of livelihood of local population. With notification of their land in the sanctuary, their livelihood has been affected and the state is not in a position to provide compensation to them. The fact that the notification was issued after an order of High Court of Andhra Pradesh, and that CEC and Supreme Court had also ordered removal of fish tanks created by the local people within the sanctuary area had complicated the situation and the state wanted to exclude the private zirayati lands from the sanctuary so that the local poor are not deprived from their lands and can also be encouraged to participate in conservation of the wetland.

The Committee deliberated on the matter in detail. It took note of the fact that the wetland of 901 sq. km area is a Ramsar site, the present extent of 308 sqkm under the sanctuary covers some private lands belonging to local poor which are located along north eastern side of the sanctuary, and the main area of the sanctuary is an excellent habitat of migratory birds. The Committee, felt that the observations of AP High Court, those of CEC and Supreme Court and the recommendations of Aziz Committee constituted by Standing Committee of NBWL in 2010 are to be understood in backdrop of the resolution of the State Assembly for reduction of the area of the sanctuary before a considered decision can be taken in this regard. Therefore, it was agreed that a Working Group will be constituted to study all aspects of the matter.

The Working Group shall include member Prof R. Sukumar, representative of Wild Life Institute of India, nominee of Wild Life Division of the Ministry and a representative of the State Forest Department of Andhra Pradesh. The Group shall visit and see the area, brainstorm on all aspects of the proposal and suggest viable options, including for rationalization of boundaries of

the sanctuary, for conservation of the wetland and the sanctuary while ensuring that no hardships are caused to the bona fide owners of the lands in the area.

The options to be provided by the Working Group shall be placed before the Standing Committee for consideration. State Government shall provide all the necessary assistance including information and documents to the Working Group for completing their task at the earliest possible. The Working Group shall give their report within 2 months.

The meeting came to an end with vote of thanks to the chair.

\*\*\*